

James R. Johnsen, Ed.D.

President

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March 10, 2017

The Honorable Mia Costello
Alaska State Senate
State Capitol Building, Room 504
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Senator Costello,

Thank you for introducing Senate Bill 85 reauthorizing the Alaska Technical Vocational Education Program (TVEP) until 2020. TVEP provides grants to education entities who provide career and technical training. The University of Alaska depends on TVEP funds to help educate and train the skilled and talented workforce Alaska needs to build a diverse, robust and competitive economy.

The TVEP program at the University of Alaska has made a significant impact on the economy since its inception by expanding nursing and other critical health programs, creating employment opportunities within the natural resource sectors including oil and gas, mining, fisheries and maritime. Other industries directly benefitting from the university's TVEP investments are hospitality and tourism, education, information technology, transportation and construction. Industry advisory committees guide the university programs to ensure they meet current employer requirements and assist graduates of both credit and non-credit programs to gain employment upon successful completion.

Future opportunities in workforce development include specialized and rural health occupations as Medicaid Expansion and our aging population continues to grow; diversification of our natural resource development as manufacturing sectors become even more critical to generate revenue; and strengthening our career and technical education programs to create a work- and college-ready culture of education. More information on how the university is effectively using TVEP funding is available at <https://www.alaska.edu/research/wp/funding/>.

We have an imperative here in Alaska to meet the workforce demands of a rapidly changing world economy. National experts are predicting that by 2025, sixty-five percent of jobs in Alaska will require some form of post-secondary education. Forty percent of those are expected to need some form of career or technical certification. TVEP is an important piece of achieving those goals and ensuring we are meeting the needs of employers. Please let me know how the University of Alaska can assist you in advancing this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James R. Johnsen".
James R. Johnsen